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State Superintendent of Public Instruction

**CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT
OF
EDUCATION**

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Dear High School District Superintendents:

As you are aware, teenage drivers are greatly overrepresented in automobile accidents. Road injuries are a major contributor to disability and loss of life. According to traffic safety research teenage overrepresentation in accidents may be attributed to two major factors which are: immaturity and inexperience. For this reason, it is vitally important that high schools continue to offer driver education as required by state law.

California Education Code Section 51220(J) states in part that the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12 shall include, "Automobile driver education, designated to develop a knowledge of the provisions of the Vehicle Code and other laws of this state relating to the operation of motor vehicles. A proper acceptance of personal responsibility in traffic, a true appreciation of the causes, seriousness and consequences of traffic accidents, and to develop the knowledge and attitude necessary for the safe operation of motor vehicles." The purpose of this requirement is to eliminate/reduce the risk of young drivers during their early years of driving, by learning to drive safely. For additional questions and answers about driver education, please visit our department web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ps/defag.html>.

Last year the California Legislature enacted AB 2733 (Chapter: 642/Wesson) which amended Section 33319.3 of the Education Code to require the California Department of Education (CDE) to "prepare certain materials, that focus on the reduction of future driving violations, with particular emphasis on aggressive driving behavior, and behavior commonly known as "road rage" and to make these materials available to school districts, to use at the option of the District." "Road rage" has been defined as a range of anti-social behavior and/or acts of aggression, which occur on the road. Therefore, it is important that school districts incorporate "road rage" into the driver education curriculum to prepare students for avoidance and to mitigate it when it occurs.

Although AB 2733 did not provide funding for materials, the CDE nevertheless recommends a number of excellent resources. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is an excellent primary source for information on road rage. The AAA Foundation web site contains two excellent articles: (1) *Aggressive Driving: Three Studies (March 1997)* and (2) *Controlling Road Rage: A Literature Review and Pilot Study (June 9, 1999)*. The Internet contains a wealth of information and resources on road rage. The following web pages are recommended as good resources for information on aggressive driving and road rage:

AAA.Foundation for Traffic Safety: <http://www.aafts.org/>

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Drivers.com: <http://www.drivers.com/>

American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association: <http://adtsea.iup.edu/adtsea/>

Citizens Against Speeding and Aggressive Driving: <http://aggressivedriving.org/>

The continued offering of Driver Education and incorporation of "Road Rage" curriculum can improve the quality of driver education in our schools and reduce the number of teen accidents. If you should have any questions, you may contact Robert Lee, Consultant, at (916) 323-5799 or e-mail at rlee@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Leslie Fausset, Chief Deputy Superintendent
Policy and Programs

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